

THE  
WIGAN RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

For the Year 1903.

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STANDISH,

*February, 1904.*

*To the Chairman and Members of the Wigan Rural District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in submitting my Annual Report for the past year.

Thanking you for the kind assistance you have always given me in any matter brought forward.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

J. H. WILSON, M.D.,

*Medical Officer of Health.*

*Fellow of the British Institute of Public Health.*



# STATISTICAL SUMMARY FOR 1903.

TABLE I.

				<i>Population at Census, 1901.</i>				<i>Estimated Population July 1st, 1903.</i>			
<i>Acres.</i>											
Shevington	...	...	1,728	...	...	1,759	...	...	...	1,790	
Wrightington	...	...	3,916	...	...	1,868	...	...	...	1,963	
Haigh	...	...	2,135	...	...	1,269	...	...	...	1,376	
Parbold	...	...	1,159	...	...	579	...	...	...	586	
Dalton	...	...	2,104	...	...	480	...	...	...	433	
Worthington	...	...	659	...	...	258	...	...	...	265	
<u>11,701</u>				<u>6,213</u>				<u>6,413</u>			

TABLE II.

				<i>Total Births Registered.</i>				<i>Annual Birth Rate per 1,000 of population.</i>			
Shevington	...	...	...	...	...	63	...	...	...	35.19	
Wrightington	...	...	...	...	...	53	...	...	...	27.00	
Haigh	...	...	...	...	...	32	...	...	...	23.25	
Parbold	...	...	...	...	...	15	...	...	...	25.59	
Dalton	...	...	...	...	...	10	...	...	...	23.09	
Worthington	...	...	...	...	...	6	...	...	...	22.64	
				<u>179</u>							

TABLE III.

				<i>Total Deaths Registered.</i>				<i>Death Rate per 1,000 of population.</i>			
Shevington	...	...	...	...	...	19	...	...	...	10.61	
Wrightington	...	...	...	...	...	25	...	...	...	12.75	
Haigh	...	...	...	...	...	22	...	...	...	15.98	
Parbold	...	...	...	...	...	12	...	...	...	20.47	
Dalton	...	...	...	...	...	8	...	...	...	18.47	
Worthington	...	...	...	...	...	7	...	...	...	26.41	
				<u>93</u>							

TABLE IV.

MORTALITY FROM ALL CAUSES AT SUBJOINED AGES.

		<i>Under 1 year.</i>	<i>1 and under 5.</i>	<i>5 and under 15.</i>	<i>15 and under 25.</i>	<i>25 and under 65.</i>	<i>Over 65.</i>	<i>Total.</i>			
Shevington	...	3	3	1	1	10	1	...	...	...	19
Wrightington	...	7	3	—	1	8	6	...	...	...	25
Haigh	...	7	4	2	—	5	4	...	...	...	22
Parbold	...	5	—	1	—	5	1	...	...	...	12
Dalton	...	3	1	—	1	3	—	...	...	...	8
Worthington	...	1	1	—	—	2	3	...	...	...	7
		26	12	4	3	33	15	...	...	...	93

TABLE V.

## CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFIED.

	SHEVINGTON.		WRIGHTINGTON.		HAIGH.		PARBOLD.		DALTON.		WORTHINGTON.	
	Notifica- tions.	Deaths.	Notifica- tions.	Deaths.	Notifica- tions.	Deaths.	Notifica- tions.	Deaths.	Notifica- tions.	Deaths.	Notifica- tions.	Deaths.
Smallpox	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	—
Scarlatina	...	16	...	—	...	24	...	1	...	1	...	2
Diphtheria	...	1	...	—	...	2	...	—	...	1	...	—
Croup	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	1	...	—
Typhus	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	—
Enteric	...	2	...	1	...	3	...	2	...	—	...	—
Continued	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	—
Puerperal	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	1
Erysipelas	...	5	...	—	...	2	...	—	...	—	...	—
Measles	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	—
	24	1	...	15	1	31	...	3	...	3	...	3



TABLE VI.

							Infantile Deaths.				Infantile Death Rate per 1,000 Births.
Shevington	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	47·61
Wrightington	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	...	...	..	132·07
Haigh	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	...	...	...	218·79
Parbold	...	...	..	...	...	...	5	...	..	...	333·33
Dalton	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	300·00
Worthington	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	166·66
							—	—	—	—	
							26				

TABLE VII.

CAUSES OF DEATH OTHER THAN ZYMOTIC DISEASES.

			Shevington.		Wrightington.		Haigh.		Parbold.		Dalton.		Worthington.		Total.
Phthisis	...	...	1	...	—	...	—	...	1	...	—	...	—	...	2
Tubercular Affections other than Phthisis	}		—	...	1	...	—	..	1	...	—	...	—	...	2
Cancer	...	...	1	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	1
Respiratory Diseases			6	...	3	...	7	...	2	...	—	...	1	...	19
Cirrhosis of Liver	...		—	...	—	...	1	...	—	...	—	...	—	...	1
Premature Birth	...		1	...	3	...	3	...	1	...	1	...	—	...	9
Heart Disease	...		—	...	3	...	3	...	1	...	—	...	—	...	7
Accidents	...		1	...	3	...	2	...	—	...	—	...	1	...	7
All other Diseases	...		9	...	10	...	8	...	4	...	5	...	4	...	40
			19	...	23	...	24	...	10	...	6	...	6	...	88

*Estimated Population.*—This is 6,413, being an increase of 90 over the previous year.

*Births.*—These numbered 179, being a decrease of 17. The largest number took place, as usual, in Shevington, 63, whilst Worthington showed the fewest, 6. The difference in birth rates of these two townships is great, in the one township it is 35·1, and in the other 22·6.

*Deaths.*—The total number recorded is strangely exactly the same as last year, viz., 93. Wrightington contributing 25, with a rate of 12·7; Shevington 19, with a rate of 10·6; Haigh 22, with a rate of 15·9; Parbold 12, with a rate of 20·4; Dalton 8, with a rate of 18·4; and Worthington (which in 1902 had only 1 death, with a rate of 3·7) contributed 7 deaths, with a rate of 26·4.

*Infectious Diseases.*—The notifications received were 79 in number, being 4 less than the previous year, and this in spite of the outbreak of Scarlet Fever amongst the children attending Red Rock School which contributed 24 cases of Scarlet Fever and 2 of Diphtheria. Scarlet Fever has been reported in all Rural townships, the greater number in Haigh, then comes Shevington with 16 cases, Wrightington 6 cases, Worthington 2 cases, Dalton and Parbold 1 case each.

*Diphtheria.*—4 cases were notified, with 1 death, the fatal case taking place in Dalton. There were 2 cases in Haigh and 1 in Shevington.

*Croup.*—There were only 3 cases, 2 of them being in Wrightington and 1 in Dalton, neither being fatal.

*Enteric Fever.*—There has been a slight increase in the number of cases of this affection, 8 cases coming under notice as against 6 for 1902. They were located as follows: 2 in Shevington (Crooke) with 1 death, 1 in Wrightington, 3 in Haigh, and 2 in Parbold, the latter both being in one house.

*Puerperal Fever*.—There were no cases of this affection.

*Erysipelas*.—This gave rise to 13 notifications, 5 in Shevington, 6 in Wrightington, and 2 in Haigh. 1 case was fatal in Wrightington.

*Measles*.—This infectious disease is not scheduled under the notification act, nor has it been included by resolution of my Council, so that we do not know if there have been any cases. Personally I do not know of any cases having occurred, and there are no deaths ascribed to this cause.

*Smallpox*.—This loathsome disease has happily not visited us.

A pleasing feature to which I may draw your attention, is the smallness of the number of deaths from infectious disease, viz., 5, whilst in the previous year I had to record 15 deaths as due to these causes.

*Infantile Deaths*.—These were 26 in number, and like the total deaths is the same as for 1902. Wrightington and Haigh gave the most, viz., 7 each. Parbold comes next with 5, Shevington and Dalton contributed 3 each, and Worthington 1 only.

A reference to table VI. will show that with the exception of Shevington, Wrightington and Dalton, these rates are excessive. As a guide in reading these rates, I may say that for the whole of the Rural District in the Administrative County of Lancashire, the rate for 1902 was 116 per 1,000 births.

*Infantile Diarrhoea (Zymotic Enteritis)*.—Only 1 death was recorded and occurred in Wrightington.

*Phthisis*.—The deaths from this affection again shows a decline, only 1 being recorded as against 2 in 1902 and 7 in 1901.

The agitation started a few years ago in regard to this affection and the information circulated regarding it, by causing persons who may be affected to seek relief earlier, and the fact which most people now know that consumption is curable, has to my mind, together with improved sanitation, had great effect in bringing about this desirable result.

*Respiratory Diseases*.—The deaths from these numbered 19, a decrease of 2 on those recorded in the previous year.

*Premature Births*.—These gave rise to 9 deaths which is certainly a large number.

*Accidental Deaths*.—There were quite an unusual number of accidental deaths, viz., <sup>7</sup> and were as follows: 1 drowned at Shevington; 3 drowned at Wrightington; 2 drowned at Parbold; 1 killed at Worthington. The latter case was one of an elderly woman who fell and broke her thigh, the results of which brought about her death.

*Housing of Working Classes Act*.—No measures have been necessary under this Act. There are sufficient houses for the needs of the population, the houses are well-built, and there is practically no overcrowding. The open and uncovered privies and middens are the part which necessitate most attention, and many of the old ones have been attended to during the year and brought into line with the byelaws of the Council.

*Drains, Sewage and Sewage Disposal*.—In the past this has mostly been by means of cess-pools, and drainage into water courses.

In Shevington the work of draining Crooke and erecting the necessary filter beds, &c., is on the point of being commenced. The scheme for the drainage of the Almond Brook, Broad'oth' Lane, and Gathurst Lane portions of the township are somewhat in abeyance on account of the difficulty of obtaining suitable lands.



During the year a Local Government Board Enquiry was held into a proposed scheme of sewerage and sewage disposal works for dealing with the sewage from the cottages of the Standish Company, at the west side of the Township of Haigh, together with a few houses in Chorley Lane which are in Standish. The scheme was not approved of by the Inspector, who suggested certain alterations, but the Council found the cost in money of the construction and maintenance would be far greater than they were warranted in spending. This matter will have to be brought forward again.

Parbold have made several earnest efforts to devise a suitable scheme or what is apparently far more difficult to obtain—suitable land—in order that they may deal efficiently with their sewage. The last scheme seemed a good and feasible one, but the conditions sought to be imposed by Lord Derby rendered their acceptance impossible to the Parbold Parochial Committee. However the Committee are again at work and will no doubt succeed in obtaining the necessary land before long.

Appley Bridge is still without any sewerage system, and I shall have to keep this matter before you.

Worthington (or at any rate that portion where the population mostly exist) is likely to be provided with a suitable scheme before long.

Dalton and Wrightington are without any systematic sewerage, nor in fact do they need it.

*Excrement Disposal.*—This is disposed of by being used for manurial purposes on the agricultural land, of which most of the townships are made up, so there is no dearth of space for its proper disposal. Removal of ashpit refuse is carried out by contract, and is in the main well done. Some of the Appley Bridge portion of the township of Wrightington is provided with pails, and most of the grievances about emptying seem to apply mostly to these and to the cesspools.

*Water Supply.*—Shevington, Appley Bridge portion of Wrightington, Haigh, and Parbold have public supplies, constant, and of good quality. Wrightington is still unsupplied publicly on account of the discovery, made when all the details of the scheme were ready for carrying into effect that the proposed water would be unfit for drinking unless subjected to some form of chemical treatment before distribution. This was most unfortunate as it appeared as if the township would have its public supply by next summer. However, I have no doubt that plenty of good water does exist, and we shall soon, I hope, have an alternative source of supply.

The Township of Dalton has a plentiful supply of good water drawn from wells; the unfortunate part of the matter is that no one seems to think it their business to keep the wells clean, and this duty devolves on the Council.

Worthington has plenty of water also from wells.

*Lodging Houses.*—There are none within the several townships.

*Slaughter-houses.*—There are only two and both are inspected and found in good order.

*Factories and Workshops.*—There are very few in the district. They have been inspected and found in sanitary condition, are well drained, lighted and ventilated, and separate and sufficient closet accommodation for the sexes is provided. There are no home-workers, and no underground bakehouses.

*Food and Drugs Account.*—No action taken.

*Canal Boats.*—Thirty-seven inspections were made, but no case of infectious disease was met with. Two infringements of the regulations were discovered but of a slight character and were remedied on drawing the owners' attention to them.

*Miners' Worm Disease.*—In those portions of district where miners live, viz.: Haigh and Shevington, circulars, drawn up by me, have been distributed amongst the inhabitants drawing attention to the grave dangers they run by the introduction of this disease into the mines, and placing before them certain simple precautions to be observed by them. I believe the instructions set forth in these leaflets will be beneficial in other directions, notably to my mind, in the prevention of enteric fever amongst miners.

*Nuisances.*—Fifteen notices were served for the abatement of nuisances. Fourteen were complied with and one is still in abeyance. No legal proceedings were taken.



